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Spy Threatens to Air CIA 'Blunders'

By CLARK MOLLENHOFF
Minneapolis Tribune
Staff Correspondent

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Hans V. Tofte, a star Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operative, has indicated he has inside information about the Bay of Pigs, Dominican Republic and Viet Nam operations that could create "embarrassing issues" for the big spy agency and for CIA Director Richard Helms.

In a letter to Charles E. Strickland, a Mason City, Iowa, friend, Tofte revealed that his analysis of the disaster of the Bay of Pigs and serious blunders in the Dominican Republic and Viet Nam were among papers seized at his home July 24 by CIA security officers.

In the letter to Strickland, Tofte indicated that a CIA security raid on his home might have been motivated by a desire to seize the highly critical analyses.

In the three-page letter, the 55-year-old former Mason City businessman outlined his differences with high agency officials since 1961, when he was outspoken in his criticism of certain of his superiors.

THE TRIBUNE learned Thursday that Tofte had written Strickland asking that he inform friends of the circumstances of his controversy with the CIA. He indicated he hoped to force an expose and a clean-up of top personnel at the CIA, and anticipated a difficult and bitter fight.

"All I ask is for my true friends to trust me all the way to the bitter end," Tofte wrote. Most of the letter represented an attack on Helms and carried the implication that Helms was one of "those who planned and executed the Bay of Pigs invasion, who are still there 'in bigger and better jobs.'"

CIA officials "tried to railroad me out of the agency" in 1961, but failed. He said Allen Dulles, then CIA director, had lost control of the agency at the time of the Bay of Pigs. He praised President John Kennedy's appointment of John McCone to head the CIA. He did not mention Helms directly but was critical of the selection of a CIA professional to head the agency.

TOFTE REVEALED that

he was at a secret meeting at the White House during the Kennedy administration, during which he warned of the effects of professional CIA men to hide their blunders in connection with the Bay of Pigs.

He said he told unidentified White House personnel at that time, "The worst mistake the president of the United States could possibly make would be to put a CIA professional in the top spot of the agency."

He suggested that his friends in Mason City read a book, "The Invisible Government," to gain some impression of what he is up against. He said the authors of the book, Tom Ross and David Wise, were harassed by the agency. Tofte said his wife, Marlys, had been subjected to surveillance in recent weeks.

"THE DAY this behind-the-scenes setup, working under the protection of official secrecy, becomes strong enough by escaping rigorous congressional controls, we will have the beginnings of a police state in America. It could be terribly misused by a ruthless politician in the White House before Congress and the American people even knew it," Tofte said in his letter.

Tofte said he did not agree completely with Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., relative to the problems of the CIA, but felt that a tight congressional scrutiny of its operations was essential.